

LIMPLEY STOKE PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Held at the Village Hall on the 5th of December 2023 at 7.00pm

Councillors: Mr Ian Barnes (IB), Lucy Poloniecka (LP), Mandy Majendie (MM), Sara-Jane Socha (SJS), Chimene Roberts (CR), Elaine Curtin (EC) Nicky Boulton (NB), Jane Darling (JD), Mr Johnny Kidney (JK) (County Councillor for Winsley and Westwood

Apologies: Francis Firmstone (FF),

In Attendance: Bryony Kohn (Parish Clerk)

Members of the public: Eight

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Item	Action
<p>092/23 Declarations of Interest None</p> <p>093/23 Open Forum</p> <p>a. Unitary Councillor for Winsley and Westwood Report- Mr Johnny Kidney (JK)</p> <p>JK confirmed the Gas work repairs in Lower Stoke and Crowe Hill would run from January until May and would cause residents disruption. A meeting for residents is to be held on 6th December regarding managing the closure.</p> <p>Highways England are planning Geotech works on the A36 in 2024. This will probably be in the summer. Wall repairs in the A36 Claverton area are due in 2025.</p> <p>The B3108- Winsley Hill, will be resurfaced between 26th February until the 5th March 2024 with probable night closures.</p> <p>Work on the railway bridge in Bradford on Avon is still ongoing. It is due For reopening on 15th December 2023.</p> <p>Community Orchard Funding- A £50,000 fund has been awarded to Wiltshire for communities to put forward a bid for finances.</p>	

JK confirmed to the PC that the 94 bus is to continue in its present form and timetable until April, with additional funding from Wiltshire CC. However, the route during January to May, will need to be adjusted to accommodate the road closure around the Lower Stoke/ Crowe Hill areas. A small bus may be used.

A Police and Crime consultation is open regarding budget priorities and runs until the 29th of January 2024

The Community Ownership Fund has re-opened for applications.

b.Public address

Eight members of the public attended the meeting to outline their opposition to the planning application **PL/2023/09301** on the agenda.

IB outlined to the meeting the discussion points. **(Attachment 1)**

One resident questioned the change to the landscape date of 2016, and suggested that 2013 was the correct date.

There are currently 29 objections to the application with Wiltshire Planning department.

A group of residents have commissioned a report by Holmes Partnership to assess the application.

A resident expressed concern about the number of trees being felled in the Limpley Stoke valley and asked if this could be prevented. IB said that after advice from a Wiltshire Council Tree specialist, there is no control unless the trees have TPO's as Limpley Stoke is not in a conservation area.

A second resident expressed concern about tree felling that had occurred in the past on the site. The resident said that the integrity of the village was being undermined and was sad that this was being compromised by this development. The environment, ecology and heritage were being stripped. The resident felt that the felling in the past was underhand, and Wiltshire tree specialists were showing a lack of concern. The resident was also concerned that the Middle Stoke developments were being used as a precedent by the applicant and that the applicant, as a member of the PC, should be fighting for the integrity of planning in the village.

SJS felt that the application went against the Wiltshire Policy Plan.

JK said that the National Policy Framework allows for a limited amount of infill. The core strategy of Wiltshire is to preserve AONB and not develop in small villages such as Limpley Stoke. Small village developments should be for affordable housing and employment- not profit and large houses. These proposed new houses are not affordable housing.

The Neighbourhood Plan addresses infill in the village, but the wording needs to be updated. IB will discuss this with John Adler the Chair of Freshford PC with a possible steering group to be created.

To define this proposed development as infill, is questionable. The effects to the landscape, drainage and ecology are greater than other cases in the village.

MM said that the important existing corridor of woodland for wildlife would be blocked by this proposed development.

JK said that each planning application is assessed on it's own merit, but the history of development in the village is considered.

JK will be asked to "Call in "the application to the committee if necessary. These meetings are held at 3pm in Trowbridge- the residents felt this was a difficult time for many working people.

The deadline for comments has been extended until the 19th December 2023.

094/23 Minutes

The Minutes (previously distributed to Councillors for comment) of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on the 7th of November 2023, were approved with no comment and were signed off as an official record by the Chair of the meeting.

095/23 Financial Items (BK)

BK presented the Budget figures for 2024/25 and proposed that LSPC should not ask for an increase to the Precept figure to reflect the current financial climate.

IB proposed to support the 2024/25 Budget figures

NB seconded the proposal.

The councillors voted unanimously to support the proposal.

IB proposed to support the 0% increase to the Precept
NB seconded the proposal.
The councillors voted unanimously to support the proposal.

Approval of payment of invoices and notification of receipts.

1. **SO172 B Kohn**– Clerk salary:
Decision: Approved
2. **DD335 I Barnes**– Refreshments: **£45.96**
Decision: Approved
3. **DD336 Royal British Legion**– Poppy Wreath **£20**
Decision: Approved
4. **DD337 Idverde**- Playpark Litterbin emptying, Nov: **£18.25**
Decision: Approved
5. **DD339 Limpley Stoke Village Hall**– Annual hall Hire: **£264**
Decision: Approved
6. **DD340 Alan Duck**- Grasscutting etc Oct/Nov: **£815**
Decision: Approved
7. **DD341 - ICO** – Annual GDPR fee: **£35**
Decision: Approved

095/23 Planning

PL/2023/09301 Cliffe House, Cliffe Drive, Limpley Stoke, Bath, BA2 7FY

Proposal: Erection of 2 detached dwellings on land at Cliffe House, and creation of a new vehicular access with associated works.

IB proposed to object to the application
MM seconded the proposal
The councillors voted unanimously to object to the application

PL/2023/09795 Treglisson, 26 Crowe Lane, Freshford, Bath, BA2 7WB

Proposal: Roof extension and alterations to existing house

IB proposed No Comment to the application
JD seconded the proposal
The councillors voted unanimously to support the No Comment proposal

096/23 Councillor Updates

LP reported that there had been some activity at Limpley Mill.

MM said that the number of subscribers to the website had exceeded 250 which affects the number of emails that can be sent out. MM will be away in January, so the website updates will be affected.

SJS and CR have inspected the Playpark. SJS will look at a possible swing upgrade in the new year. A new maintenance worker has been appointed by LSPC to carry out odd jobs in the park and around the village.

EC has contacted the resident regarding the broken handrail and wire fencing on the footpath leading from the hall to the A36. The resident has now repaired the handrail.

Litterbins on Winsley Hill have been overflowing. Councillors felt that this was due to the bins being taken away along the canal.

Councillors discussed whether a dog poo bin was needed by the canal for dog owners to deposit their waste- there is no nearby facility. This is in Winsley PC area, so BK will ask the Winsley PC Clerk.

CR to ask Alan Duck to cut the overhanging branches on The Twizzle

EC will discuss possible sites for a flashing speed sign on Middle Stoke

IB reported that the Residents parking on Lower Stoke would be researched in the new year.

IB reported that white give way lines on Lower Stoke would be researched in the new year

NB attended the Flisca meeting last week. Due to the work of volunteers, the café build costs came in under budget. A new logo and marketing strategy is being researched. Community grants are available for local projects.

SJS reported that parking on Midford Lane is becoming a problem. SJS will monitor the situation.

097/23 Any Other Business

None

098/23 Date of Next Meeting. – Tuesday 9th January 2023 at 7.00pm.

The Chair closed the meeting at 9pm

Signed (Chair).....

Planning application PL/2023/09301

Considerations for discussion by Limpley Stoke Parish Council at meeting on 05/12/2023

1. Traffic and safety

1.1 Traffic numbers

The Parish Council has a traffic speed sign on Crowe Hill, collecting data on traffic travelling North (down Crowe Hill) with the planned drive on the left hand side.

The average vehicle numbers **in this one direction** are 90 + vehicles per hour at peak times (08.00 to 09.00 and 18.00 to 20.00). Assuming that the same number of vehicles are coming in the opposite direction, that totals **3 vehicles per minute** passing the proposed new driveway. In total there are over 700 + vehicles per day in this one direction. Many of these vehicles are vans. Statistics from the speed sign are available to Highways if required. We would also note that Crowe Hill is part of the alternative route when the A36 is closed for any reason. At these times traffic is often at a standstill and ,when moving slowly, uses all possible passing places including pavements.

Freshford School is a destination for some of this traffic and particularly at school drop off and pick up times there is already an issue of two way traffic mounting the pavement and using the virtual pavement.

1.2 Splayed double width drive with electric gates

We would like it taken into account that residents of the proposed properties will be turning on and off a, at times, busy road. There is significant opportunity for disruption to current residents and passing traffic with cars entering and leaving the new properties. We already have a build-up of traffic at times along this stretch with the commensurate danger to pedestrians and other road users.

It is also difficult to see how, with this plan, reasonable visibility exiting the drive can be maintained. Any widening of the drive entrance to enable greater visibility would be visually and environmentally harmful. It would also exacerbate the issue raised in the next paragraph.

There are many examples in Limpley Stoke and adjacent Freshford where splayed drives such as the one proposed are used as passing places thus encouraging use of this route as an alternative to the A36 and adding further to the traffic hazards.

The Parish Council supported the closure of Woods Hill to reduce the danger at its junction with the A36. This has led to some increase in vehicles now using Lower Stoke, Crowe Hill and Crowe Lane. We want to avoid encouraging drivers that this provides a usable alternative route. Increasing the number of passing places will not help in this endeavour.

1.3 Gradient

The safety concerns around ingress and exit of vehicles from the new drive are further exacerbated by the gradient of the proposed drive. Any lapse of concentration on such a gradient could have serious consequences.

There are other examples in the area of steep drives and problems in icy conditions where joining the road can be hazardous.

During construction of the house permitted under PL/2022/03625 a fence had to be constructed on the slope below the site to prevent further logs and other debris rolling onto Crowe Hill.

Given the gradient of the site, the unstable nature of the ground and the removal of trees, the danger of rolling debris remains.

1.4 Inconvenience to neighbours facing the new drive

Given the gradient of the proposed driveway and the orientation of vehicles using it will lead to issues of overlooking into properties facing the entrance, as well as impact from car lights shining into properties at quite close distance. We believe that this will cause unnecessary impact on their enjoyment of their residences and potentially on their wellbeing.

1.5 Surface water

We already have drainage problems on Crowe Hill and Lower Stoke.

Construction of a drive with two houses and their associated parking areas and patios will reduce the amount of surface drainage thus potentially exacerbating the drainage problem. The drainage solution proposed does not appear to be sufficient to deal with this.

2. Precedence and neighbourhood plan

2.1. Green belt

Limpley Stoke is in the green belt and due consideration needs to be applied.

2.2. AONB

Limpley Stoke is an area of outstanding beauty and due consideration needs to be applied.

2.3 Neighbourhood plan

The infill of previously granted infill is not consistent with the Neighbourhood Plan.

Section 3.4.01 of the Neighbourhood Plan states: ' Three Village Settlements have been drawn (see Map 2) defining the main built areas within which a limited amount of infill housing may be developed. These have been defined using the following criteria:

- They avoid environmentally sensitive areas such as green fields, **woodlands**, flood plains and areas of **steep topography**.

Map 2 in the Neighbourhood Plan shows the area for development as WOODLAND. The purple colour used to define the settlement areas has faded the green colour defining WOODLAND. A closer analysis of the map will show that the area outlined for development has indeed been defined as WOODLAND.

It can already be seen from plans and visual confirmation that the development site falls under the description of steep topography.

Referring again to the Neighbourhood plan:

(c) Villages Design Statement

New developments: New developments must be mindful of and sensitive to the physical and environmental context of the site and its location. This includes the need for any development to be proportionate both to its site and in relation to its immediate neighbours.

Design: The design, contemporary or traditional, must be a positive addition to the rural environment reflecting the character of its setting and acknowledging the local built heritage. It must sit well in the landscape and not dominate it.

Detailing: The detailing of new development and changes to existing buildings must reflect the quality of craftsmanship and materials both of the area and of the specific location.

Where possible, local and durable materials should be used which improve appearance with age. Any exterior lighting must minimise light pollution.
We believe that the proposed plans do not fulfil the above.

2.4 Previous planning granted

The Parish Council rejects the analogy made by the applicant between this application and that granted for the two dwellings on Middle Stoke. The latter was for two modest houses with fewer environmental impact and safety considerations. These houses have also been constructed using materials and in a style which are sympathetic with their surroundings and on relatively level ground.

We would question any claim of precedence where development is concerned. Each application should be treated on its own merits or demerits.

The Parish Council would like to draw particular attention to the following planning applications during recent years, which have been approved, (with one still under consultation), in the village.

For completeness we have included planning granted by BaNES within the curtilage of Limpley Stoke village. The Parish Council feels that the environment and visual amenity of the village has already been impacted by these new builds.

Application Reference: [17/05351/FUL](#) (BANES)

Application Address: Woodwick Hall, Midford Lane, Limpley Stoke, Bath, Wiltshire, BA2 7GP

Proposal: Erection of **two dwellings** and associated access drive.

Planning Portal Reference: PP-06480426

Application Received: 02/11/2017

Application Status: **Application Permitted**

Planning Application Reference: 15/03581/FUL (BANES)

Greenacre, Warminster Road, Freshford, Bath, Bath And North East Somerset, BA2 7GJ

Proposal

Erection of new build house within the boundary of Greenacre (resubmission).

Full Application

Status

Application Permitted

18/10212/FUL (WILTS)

Site Address: Land rear of Spye House

32 Midford Lane

Limpley Stoke

BA2 7GR

Proposal

New chalet bungalow in the rear garden of 32 Midford Lane

Approve with Conditions

18/03006/FUL (WILTS)

Site Address

Land South East Of 18

Midford Lane

Limpley Stoke

BA2 7GP

Proposal

Erection of **two dwellings** with associated access, car parking and landscaping

Issued Decision

Approved with Conditions

19/10471/FUL

Site Address
3A Church Lane
Limpley Stoke
BA2 7GH

Proposal

Erection of 2 No. dwellings and associated landscaping and access works (amended design).

Approved with conditions

16/05118/OUT

Site Address
Southernwood
Plot 1 Church Lane
Limpley Stoke
Wiltshire
BA2 7GH

Approve with conditions

16/04907/FUL

Site Address
Southernwood (Plot 3)
Church Lane
Limpley Stoke
Wiltshire
BA2 7GH

Proposal

Erection of 1 No. dwelling and associated access and landscaping works (Plot 3)

Approve with conditions

20/10522/FUL

Site Address
The Old Thatched House, 18 Midford Lane, Limpley Stoke, BA2 7GP

Proposal

Proposal for a single new dwelling house with 3 bedrooms, associated landscaping works and hard standing within the curtilage of the existing house.

Under consultation

PL/2022/03625

Site Address
Cliffe House, Cliffe Drive, Limpley Stoke, BA2 7FY

Proposal

New dwelling within the curtilage of Cliffe House and single storey detached garage, with associated works

Approve with conditions

3. Environmental

3.1 Lights

The design consultant's statement that the lighting of the area will not be affected is inaccurate. There is one streetlamp adjacent to the proposed drive. The next lamp down Crowe Hill is 100 metres away and is a recently installed LED (Cotswold AONB grade II) down lighter of which the light emission dims after midnight so that residents and wildlife are not unduly disturbed. The next lamp up Crowe Hill is a yellow sodium light some 100 metres

away. All streetlights in the village are due for renewal by Wiltshire Council to the new low emission LEDs. This stretch after sundown is extremely dark.

3.2 Trees

Design consultant statement

The design consultant's statement that the site has not been altered since 2016 is inaccurate.

Felling of trees, some of which have been carried out under planning application for Ash die back, is documented on the Wiltshire Planning website. The landscape of the site is therefore already significantly different than in 2016.

The construction of the dwelling granted under application PL/2022/03625, along with garage, during 2022/23 must also be regarded as a change to the site since 2016.

4. Other considerations

Following the applicants' application for planning granted under PL/2022/03625 we welcome the replacement of felled trees with new ones. However, the claim of the design consultant that these offer a benefit to birds and other wildlife is fallacious; it will take years for the saplings to reach maturity, removal of shrubs and low lying vegetation is particularly injurious to wildlife and the poor ground was not well prepared, which may lead to the early demise of many of the saplings.